

**President Bush's
U.S. Ocean Action Plan**



Governors' Regional Leadership

**Congressional Briefing
June 12, 2006**

Protecting America's Sea

- Introduction to the Gulf of Mexico Alliance
- A Brief History
- The Partnership
- The *Governors' Action Plan*
- Commitments by the Alliance
- Supporting Our Regional Momentum



North America's Sea of Opportunity

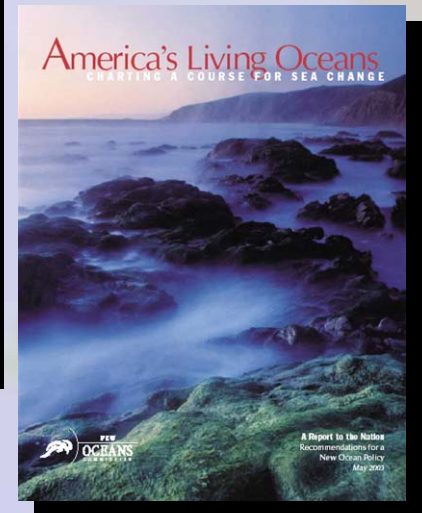
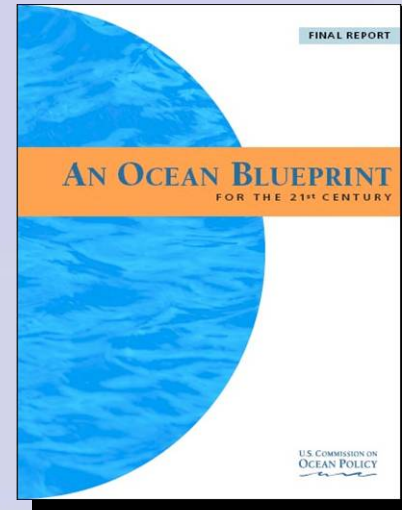
Gulf of Mexico Alliance Video



Setting the Stage ...

U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and Joint Ocean Commission Initiative Recommendations

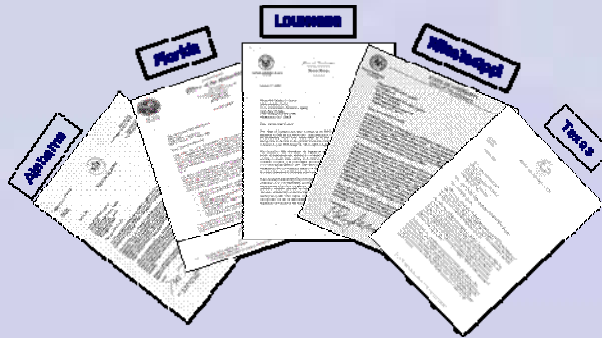
- Advance regional ecosystem approaches to management
- Address land-based pollution
- Protect coastal ecosystems, wetlands and estuaries
- Educate the next generation of ocean stewards



Alliance Strengths

- Governors' Initiative
- Action Oriented
- Cost Effective
- Integrated
- Locally Driven
- Bottom-up

Regional Concern, Governors' Initiative



- April 2004 - new “alliance” of the five Gulf State Governors
- Identified regional priority issues and state leads
 - Healthy beaches and shellfish beds – Florida
 - Coastal wetland restoration – Louisiana
 - Environmental education – Alabama
 - Identification and characterization of Gulf habitats – Texas
 - Reductions in nutrient loading – Mississippi
- Including engagement of 6 Mexican Gulf States

U.S. Ocean Action Plan

December 2004

- *Gulf of Mexico Regional Partnership Action* (page 11)
- Regular briefings to US Council on Ocean Protection (USCOP), the Subcommittee on Integrated Management of Ocean Resources (SIMOR), and Joint Subcommittee on Ocean Science and Technology (JSOST)
 - SIMOR Work Plan Commitment to Gulf of Mexico Alliance

U.S. Ocean Action Plan

The Bush Administration's
Response to the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy

Federal Workgroup

- In April 2005, CEQ forms the Federal Workgroup to support the Alliance
 - NASA
 - NSF
 - USACE
 - USDA
 - USDOC / NOAA
 - USDOD / Navy
 - USDOE
 - USDOJ
 - USDHH / PHS
 - USDOS
 - USDOT
 - USEPA
- EPA and NOAA designated as federal coordinators



Organizational Timeline

U.S. Ocean Action Plan
December 2004



Gulf of Mexico Regional Partnership
February 2005

Gulf of Mexico Alliance

***POST-HURRICANES –
Efforts support
Gulf Coast recovery and
rebuilding***



Community Workshops

- A series of 8 workshops in the Gulf States from June 2005 to February 2006
 - Gain local perspectives *on issues and solutions related to a healthy Gulf*
 - Identify programs, resources and networks *that can better inform the Gulf Alliance process*
 - Gain support *for creation of future Alliance actions*
 - Build better relationships *between local, state and federal entities*



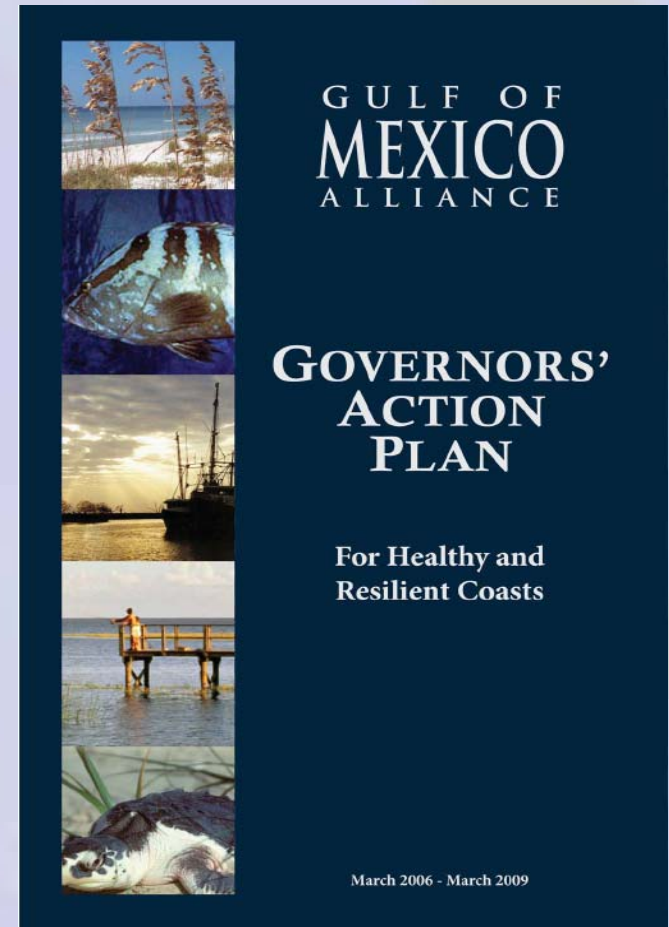
State of the Gulf of Mexico Summit

- March 28-30, 2006 in Corpus Christi, Texas
- Hosted by Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies, Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi
- Release ceremony for *Governors' Action Plan* by:
 - Gov. Rick Perry, TX
 - Gov. Kathleen Blanco, LA
 - Gob. Engenio Hernandez Flores, Tamaulipas
 - Gob. Fidel Herrera Beltran, Veracruz



Governors' Action Plan for Healthy and Resilient Coasts

- Intentionally focused (versus comprehensive)
 - 5 Priority Issues
 - 11 specific actions
- Short-term “on the ground” successes
 - 36-month outcomes
- For each action, an “Action Blueprint” with major steps
- Two projects in Mexico
- *Approved and signed by all 5 Gulf State Governors and CEQ*



Implementation Activities Matrix

- State and federal agencies identified specific contributions to accomplish major steps in *Governors' Action Plan*
- Action from March 2006 to March 2009
- The Alliance will next engage business/industry, NGOs, and academic community
- A “living document” at www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org

Implementation Activities Matrix
Governors' Action Plan
Gulf of Mexico Alliance

Updated: 2/24/2006

WATER QUALITY				
ACTION	LEAD	CONTRIBUTOR	COLLABORATOR	WHAT WILL YOU DO / DELIVER?
WQ-1: Improve harmful algal bloom detection and forecasting in the U.S. and Mexican Gulf States				
36 Month Outcomes: • Improve the current HAB Forecasting System off the Southwest Florida coast to better identify the onset of blooms and better predict the transport of blooms. • Develop a satellite detection, forecasting, and internet-based notification capability for K. brevis off the southern coast of Texas. • Develop a satellite detection and internet-based notification capability for K. brevis off the coast of the Mexican Gulf state of Veracruz.				
Action Blueprint:				
1. Improve the operational HAB Forecasting System off the Southwest Florida coast to better identify the onset of blooms and better predict the transport of blooms.	Florida, NOAA	NASA, NRL		FL will help coordinate the implementation of an improved HABs Forecasting System off the Southwest Florida coast. NOAA will improve its current HAB Forecasting System off the Southwest Florida coast (see: http://news.noaa.gov/stories.html) to better identify the onset of blooms and better predict the transport of blooms. (Lead: NOS NCCOS) NASA has a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory to increase the availability of NASA data and NRL remote sensing techniques to the operational HAB forecasting system. Project results will be available to the Alliance. (Lead: NOS NCCOS) NOAA will convene a workshop to review scientific achievements in understanding red tide and developing methods to mitigate the impacts of red tide on Gulf States (Lead: NOS NCCOS). LA will participate to the extent practicable in a review capacity and will attend workshop as time and funding allow. (Lead: LDEQ)
2. Conduct an interagency workshop to review scientific advances related to red tide in the Gulf of Mexico and identify future priorities for the region.	NOAA		Louisiana	NOAA will convene a workshop to review scientific achievements in understanding red tide and developing methods to mitigate the impacts of red tide on Gulf States (Lead: NOS NCCOS). LA will participate to the extent practicable in a review capacity and will attend workshop as time and funding allow. (Lead: LDEQ)
3. Hold workshops with local, state, and federal expert scientists to train personnel in HAB field sampling and microscopic identification methods and to demonstrate toxin-detection methods.	Florida, EPA, FDA		Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi	FL will co-lead these workshops. (Lead: Florida HAB Task Force and FDEP-CABIA) EPA will co-lead and co-sponsor (i.e., resources and administrative) the design, development, and implementation of these workshops. FDA will provide training in field and lab methods for phytoplankton and for toxins. AL will participate to the extent practicable in a review capacity and will attend workshops when time and funding allow. (Lead: ADEM) LA will participate to the extent practicable in a review capacity and will attend workshops when time and funding allow. (Lead: LDEQ) MS will send staff to participate.

• LEADS are responsible for accomplishing the activity
 • CONTRIBUTORS provide funding or in-kind support to accomplish the activity
 • COLLABORATORS must be "at the table" to accomplish the activity

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Some Leadership Highlights ...

- Improve operational HABs forecasting capability in Florida and expand forecasting system to Texas and Mexico – FL, TX, EPA, NOAA
- Develop Gulf Regional Sediment Management Master Plan – five Gulf States and USACE
- Streamline habitat restoration project implementation – five Gulf States and USFWS
- Establish Gulf Education Network with 17 sites conducting outreach to local communities – AL, FL, EPA, NOAA
- Develop prototype web-based Gulf priority habitat information system – LA, USGS, USACE, and NOAA
- Advance practical BST for healthy beaches – MS and EPA
- Coordinate Mexican involvement – State Dept.

On the Right Track

- Joint Ocean Commission Initiative's U.S. Ocean Policy Report Card recognized the Gulf Alliance as a bright spot in the nation
 - Regional ocean governance received highest grade
- Admiral Watkins Commends Gulf of Mexico Alliance's *Governors' Action Plan*



Value of the Gulf of Mexico Alliance

- A “working model” of regional ocean governance seen as a model by other regions
- State leadership in U.S. OAP implementation
- Will decrease overall costs and increase effectiveness of coastal management on regional scales
- Supporting Gulf Coast recovery and contributing to more resilient coastal communities – protecting lives and livelihoods

Congressional Support

- The Gulf of Mexico Restoration and Protection Act S. 2783 sponsored by Senators Lott, Landrieu, and Martinez better enables EPA to support the GOMA
- No companion legislation in the House yet
- Federal agency efforts to help implement the *Governors' Action Plan* coming out of current budgets
- Legislation to support regional efforts nationwide has been introduced but no real movement
- We'll Be Back: Detailed *Implementation Plan* to be completed in August

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